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A Panorama: West Is West

Ready for the Expedition?

- Why do we study Western civilization today?
- What contributions does Western civilization make to human civilization as a whole?
- What problems do you think Western civilization brings to the world?
- Which parts of the world are not geographically west but culturally considered part of Western civilization? Why?
- How can different civilizations coexist in harmony while maintaining their differences in the age of globalization?
- Will there be an end of history? If so, how?

LECTURE 1

An Introduction to Western Civilization

PRELUDE

A history in which every particular incident may be true may on the whole be false.

—Thomas Babington Macaulay

Every past is worth condemning.

—Friedrich Nietzsche

A look at the past reminds us of how great is the distance, and how short, over which we have come. The past makes us ask what we have done with us. It makes us ask whether our very achievements are not ironical counterpoint and contrast to our fundamental failures. —Robert Penn Warren

How do these scholars view history? What can we learn from the history of Western civilization?

PREPARATION

For a long time, Western civilization has been the dominant civilization in the world, for better or for worse. Western civilization, like many other civilizations, has its own origins, progress, peak times, and as some scholars believe, its decline. It is a long and complicated story. It makes great contributions to human civilization, but it also brings great problems.

Today's world is filled with complex societies and civilizations. Understanding their origins is an important part of understanding their roles in the world—how they make contributions and why they cause problems.

The ways we approach a civilization can be various. We could study the history of the nations involved, or look into the particular religions which are practiced by the people. The science and technology and devices may tell part of the story, and the arts and literature may reveal more. We may study the relation between society and civilization, and even guess how the civilization will develop. But in the end, what we care most is the everyday life of ordinary people, men and women—how they enjoy their life in a particular civilization and how these particular civilizations make peace and coexist in this world. We learn from the past to make a better future.

The Idea of Western Civilization¹

¹ The following article is an introduction of a well-received textbook used at colleges in the United States for years. It gives us a general idea of how the contemporary Western historians understand the idea of Western civilization. Though many historical and cultural issues still remain in controversy, most of the scholars agree that Western civilization could be “presented as beginning at Sumer, developing in Egypt, and then flowering in Greece. From Greece it spread to Rome, then made its way to France, Germany, England, Italy, and Spain, whose emigrating colonists brought it to the Americas after 1492.” Despite its multicultural and multinational elements, Western civilization has formed its own characteristics and personality. Unlike American culture, which is often called a “collage” or a “mosaic,” Western civilization is more “like a train passing through stations,” and it is “conceived as picking up ‘cargo’ at each of its stops, but always retaining the same engine and the same baggage cars.”²

The boundary between Europe and Asia

² The West is an idea. It is not visible from space. An astronaut viewing the blue-and-white **terrestrial** globe can make out the forms of Africa, bounded by the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean. Australia, the Americas, and even Antarctica are distinct patches of blue-green in the darker waters that surround them. But nothing comparable separates Asia from Europe, East from West. Viewed from 100 miles up, the West itself is invisible. Although astronauts can see the great **Eurasian** landmass curving around the Northern Hemisphere, the **Ural Mountains**—the theoretical boundary between East and West—appear faint from space. Certainly they are less impressive than the towering **Himalayas**, the Alps, or even the **Caucasus**. People, not geology, determined that the Urals should be the **arbitrary** boundary between Europe and Asia.

conceive /kən'siv/ v. 构思, 设想
 terrestrial /tə'restriəl/ adj. 地球的
 Eurasian /ju'rezɪən/ adj. 欧亚大陆的
 hemisphere /'hemɪsfɪə/ n. (地球的) 半球
 Ural /'juərəl/ Mountains 乌拉尔山脉
 the Himalayas /'hɪmə'lajəz/ n. 喜马拉雅山脉
 Caucasus /'kɔ:kəsəs/ n. 高加索; 高加索山脉
 arbitrary /'ɑ:bɪ'trəri/ adj. 任意的; 武断的

¹

The text is adapted from the "introduction" of *A Brief History of Western Civilization: The Unfinished Legacy* (5th ed.), co-written by Mark Kishlansky, Patrick Geary, and Patricia O'Brien, published in 2006 by Longman Publishing. Mark Kishlansky is Professor of English and European History at Harvard University. Patrick J. Geary is Professor of History at the University of California. Patricia O'Brien is the author of the novel *The Glory Cloak* and co-author of *I Know Just What You Mean*, a *New York Times* bestseller.

²

The quotes in this paragraph are from Volume 1 of *Western Civilizations* (2nd brief edition), written by Judith G. Coffin and Robert C. Stacey, published by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. in 2005.

- ³ Even this determination took centuries. Originally, Europe was a name that referred only to central Greece. Gradually, Greeks extended it to include the whole Greek mainland and then the landmass to the north. Later, Roman explorers and soldiers carried Europe north and west to its modern boundaries. Asia too grew with time. Initially, Asia was only that small portion of what is today Turkey inland from the Aegean Sea. Gradually, as Greek explorers came to know of lands farther east, north, and south, they expanded their understanding of Asia to include everything east of the Don river to the north and of the Red Sea to the south.

Western civilization takes form

Aegean /i:'dʒiən/ Sea *n.* 爱琴海 (地中海的一部分, 位于希腊和土耳其之间)
Don /dn̩/ 顿河 (俄罗斯河流)
legacy /'legəsi/ *n.* 遗赠, 遗产
discern /dr'sən/ *vt.* (小心) 看出, 辨认出
Tigris /'taɪgrɪs/ 底格里斯河 (西南亚, 流经土耳其和伊拉克)
Euphrates /ju:'freɪtɪz/ 幼发拉底河 (西南亚, 流经土耳其、叙利亚和伊拉克)
heritage /'herɪtidʒ/ *n.* (文化) 遗产
crucible /'krusəbəl/ *n.* 坩埚, 熔炉
smelt /smelt/ *vt.* 熔炼
alloy /'ælɔɪ/ *n.* 合金
settler society 移民社会
harness /'ha:nəs/ *v.* 治理
dominant /'dɒmɪnənt/ *adj.* 占优势的
adhere to 坚持; 信守

3

In the history of Rome, the Latin term *civitas* (plural *civitates*), according to Cicero in the time of the late Roman Republic, refers to the social body of the citizens, united by law. It is the law that binds them together, giving them responsibilities on the one hand and rights of citizenship on the other. The agreement has a life of its own, creating a public entity (synonymous with *civitas*), into which individuals are born or accepted, and from which they die or are ejected.

- ⁴ Western civilization is as much an idea as the West itself. Under the right conditions, astronauts can see the Great Wall of China snaking its way from the edge of the Himalayas to the Yellow Sea. No comparable physical **legacy** of the West is so massive that its details can be discerned from space. Nor are Western achievements rooted forever in one corner of the world. What we call Western civilization belongs to no particular place. Its location has changed since the origins of civilization, that is, the cultural and social traditions characteristic of the *civitas*⁵, or city. “Western” cities appeared first outside the “West”, in the *Tigris and Euphrates river basins* in present-day Iraq and Iran, a region that we today call the Middle East. These areas have never lost their urban traditions, but in time, other cities in North Africa, Greece, and Italy adapted and expanded this *heritage*.
- ⁵ Until the 16th century, the western end of the Eurasian landmass was the **crucible** in which different cultural and intellectual traditions of the Near East, the Mediterranean, and northern and western Europe were **smelted** into a new and powerful **alloy**. Then “the West” expanded by establishing colonies overseas and by giving rise to the “settler societies” of the Americans, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

The good and bad influences of Western civilization

- ⁶ Western technology for **harnessing** nature, Western forms of economic and political organization, Western styles of art and music are—for good or ill—**dominant** influences in world civilization. Japan is a leading power in the Western traditions of capitalist commerce and technology. China, the most populous country in the world, **adheres to** Marxist socialist principles—a European political tradition. Millions of people

in Africa, Asia, and the Americas follow the religions of **Islam** and Christianity, both of which developed from **Judaism** in the cradle of Western civilization.

- 7 Many of today's most pressing problems are also part of the legacy of the Western tradition. The **remnants** of European colonialism have left deep **hostilities** throughout the world. The **integration** of developing nations into the world economy keeps much of humanity in a seemingly hopeless cycle of poverty as the wealth of poor countries goes to pay interest on loans from Europe and America. Hatred of Western civilization is a central, **ideological tenet** that inspired terrorist attacks on symbols of American economic and military strength on September 11, 2001⁴, and that fuels anti-Western terrorism around the world. The West itself faces a crisis. **Impoverished** citizens of former colonies flock to Europe and North America seeking a better life but often finding poverty, hostility, and **racism** instead. Finally, the advances of Western civilization endanger our very existence. Technology pollutes the world's air, water, and soil, and nuclear weapons threaten the destruction of all civilization. Yet these are the same advances that allow us to lengthen **life expectancy**, harness the forces of nature, and conquer disease. It is the same technology that allows us to view our world from outer space.
- 8 The history of Western civilization is not simply the **triumphant** story of progress, the creation of a better world. Even in areas in which we can see development, such as technology, communications, and social complexity, change is not always for the better. However, it would be equally inaccurate to view Western civilization as a progressive decline from a **mythical** golden age of the human race. The roughly 300 generations since the origins of civilization have left a rich and **contradictory** legacy to the present. Inherited political and social institutions, cultural forms, and religious and **philosophical** traditions form the framework within which the future must be created. The past does not determine the future, but it is the raw material from which the future will be made. To use this legacy properly, we must first understand it, not because the past is the key to the future, but because understanding yesterday frees us to create tomorrow.

Islam /'islə:m/ *n.* 伊斯兰教

Judaism /'dʒu:dæɪ-izəm/ *n.* 犹太教

remnant /'remnənt/ *n.* [常用复数] 残余部分

hostility /hɒ'stɪlɪti/ *n.* 敌意

integration /ɪntɪ'greɪʃən/ *n.* 同化, 融入
ideological /aɪdiə'lɒdʒɪkəl/ *adj.* 思想体系的

tenet /'tenə:t/ *n.* 原则, 信条

impoverished /im'pəvərɪʃt/ *adj.* 穷困的

racism /reɪsɪzəm/ *n.* 种族主义, 种族歧视

life expectancy 预期寿命, 平均寿命

triumphant /traɪ'ʌmfənt/ *adj.* 凯旋的, 胜利的

mythical /'mɪθɪkəl/ *adj.* 神话的, 虚构的

contradictory /kɒntrə'dɪktəri/ *adj.* 矛盾的

philosophical /fɪlə'sɔ:fɪkəl/ *adj.* 哲学的

4

The September 11 attacks were a series of coordinated terrorist attacks launched by the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda (“基地”组织) upon New York City and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area of the United States on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. The attacks killed almost 3,000 people.

RECOLLECTION

- 1 Why is it said “The West is an idea”?
- 2 Where is the boundary between Europe and Asia?
What or who determines it?
- 3 Which part of the world did Europe originally refer to?
- 4 Which part of the world did Asia initially refer to?
- 5 What are the origins of civilization?
- 6 Where did the “Western” cities first appear?
- 7 When did the idea of Western civilization finally establish based on the merging of different cultural and intellectual traditions?
- 8 How did “the West” expand to the “settler societies” of the Americans, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa?
- 9 Why does the author say that Western civilization has dominant influences on world civilization?
Can you give some examples?
- 10 Where did Islam and Christianity start to develop?
- 11 What are the big problems caused by the Western tradition? Can you give some examples?
- 12 What keeps much of humanity in a seemingly hopeless cycle of poverty?
- 13 What is the crisis the West is facing?
- 14 What is the most important legacy that Western civilization has left to the world?
- 15 What attitude should we hold toward Western civilization?

What Are the Four Cradles of Civilization?

The earliest ancient civilizations arose in four river valleys located in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. These four valleys—the Tigris and Euphrates Valley, the Nile Valley, the Indus Valley, and the Huanghe River Valley—are commonly referred to as the four cradles of civilization.

Tigris and Euphrates Valley. By 5000 B.C., Sumerian (苏美尔人的) tribes had begun to settle in the region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers—usually referred to as Mesopotamia (美索不达米亚地区), located in modern-day Iraq. The twin rivers allowed farmers to irrigate their crops, forming one of the birthplaces of agriculture in the world. Its cities were established by 3500 B.C., and writing by 2500 B.C.

Nile Valley. Egyptian farmers settled in the Nile Valley at about the same period as the Sumerians in Mesopotamia. They had a fully developed writing system and irrigation network by 3000 B.C. The ancient Egyptian civilization began to reach its peak in 3100 B.C. when King Menes united Lower and Upper Egypt.

Indus Valley. The nuclear dates of the civilization appear to be about 2500 B.C.–1700 B.C. The valley itself is located in modern-day Pakistan. The Indus Valley civilization possessed a flourishing urban architecture, and the major cities associated with the civilization comprised two large cities, Harappa (哈拉帕) and Mohenjo Daro (摩亨朱达罗). Little is known about the ancient history of this civilization.

Huanghe River Valley. Nomadic Chinese farmers had settled along the Huanghe River by around 3000 B.C. They later developed a complex writing system

incorporating both ideograms (symbols that represent concepts) and phonograms (symbols that represent sounds).

Ancient Greece: The Cradle of Western Civilization

The civilization of ancient Greece flowered more than 2,500 years ago, but it continues to influence the way we live today. Greece is made up of a peninsula and a group of islands in southeastern Europe.

The people of ancient Greece attempted to explain the world through the laws of nature. They made important discoveries in science. They developed democracy, where people govern themselves rather than being ruled by a king. The ancient Greeks also valued beauty and imagination. They wrote many stories and plays that continue to be performed today.

The people of ancient Greece could not farm most of their mountainous, rocky land, so they became excellent sailors who traveled to distant places. Greek sailors learned from many different cultures and spread their ideas far from their home.

Ancient Greek geographers divided the world into regions we still use today. The lands west of Greece are still known as the Western world while the lands east of Greece are often referred to as the Eastern world.

A cradle is a small bed for an infant. Many of the ideas that flourished in the Western world were “born” in ancient Greece; this is why Greece is often known as the Cradle of Western Civilization.

Greek Mythology

Greek mythology is based on legends passed down through generations by word of mouth, so there are many versions of Greek mythology and not all of the stories agree with one another. Myths explained nature, taught moral lessons, and provided entertainment.

Like most ancient cultures, the Greeks were polytheistic (多神崇拜的), and many of their gods looked and acted like human beings. The ancient Greeks believed their gods had unlimited powers, but Greek gods married, had children, played tricks and fought great battles with one another. The ancient Greeks attributed natural disasters to conflicts among their gods.

According to Greek mythology, the Earth goddesses emerged from nothingness called Chaos. The Earth mated with the Heaven to produce the Titans. A male Titan called Cronus led the giants until he lost a great war with Zeus, his youngest son. Then Zeus became the head of the Olympian pantheon (万神庙). Zeus was also the god of rain who ruled the sky with his powerful thunderbolt. Greek farmers relied on the rain that they believed came from Zeus, but they feared the anger of Zeus during violent thunderstorms.

Zeus had got many children, and his favorite was Athena. Athena was the goddess of wisdom and courage. Athena gave the Greeks the Olive tree. The Greeks use olive oil for cooking, and as a medicine and fuel. When the Greeks fought one another, they appealed to Athena because she was also the goddess of just warfare.

Basic Characteristics of Civilizations

The rise and fall of civilizations remain a primary focus of archaeologists (考古学家) and historians.

Their investigations have revealed that the appearance of every civilization and its reason for collapse is geographically and culturally unique. Yet, such investigations also pinpointed basic characteristics that lead to the development and collapse of civilizations regardless of their origins, resources, and history.

Large and sedentary (定居的) population.

Population growth and a sedentary lifestyle play an important role in the rise of a civilization. A large, sedentary population of multiple families depends on collaboration among the separate families with respect to natural resources. Ultimately, the shared responsibility leads to a new collective identity.

Surplus of resources. To maintain a large population, civilizations need to access large natural resources. Additionally, to meet the nutritional needs of the population, civilizations generally are dependent on the domestication (驯化) of plants and animals. Also, adequate fresh water reserves are crucial to the rise of a civilization. Without a significant source of fresh water, plants, animals, and people would perish.

Established government. Civilizations need a government to monitor and distribute resources efficiently. Regardless of governmental structure, a civilization's authorities would manage resources, organize defense of the population, and conduct relations with other societies. The government also would provide intervention (干预) for any internal disputes.

Written language. Writing is vital to the management of a civilization's resources. Civilizations require a written language to allow for communication among their members, to monitor economic transactions and documentation of laws, and to administer resources.

EXPLORATION

Task 1

American culture is often described as a “collage” or a “mosaic,” while in the text in the Collection section the author refers to Western civilization as an “alloy.” Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

America is becoming more plural every day because of the unbelievable facility of the new Third World immigrants who put a piece of their original culture inside American culture. The notion of a “dominant” American culture is changing every moment. Take Los Angeles as an example. Inhabitants of this vast city become internal tourists in the place of their own residence. There are large communities of Laotians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Mexicans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Iranians, Japanese, Armenians, and Chinese. We find here Little Saigon, Little Tokyo, Little Central America, the Iranian neighborhood in Westwood, the Armenian community in Hollywood, and the vast Mexican-American areas in East Los Angeles. Eighty-one languages, few of them European, are spoken in the elementary school system of the city of Los Angeles.

- 1 What is the main characteristic of American culture according to this passage?
- 2 What do you think is the relationship between American culture and Western civilization?
- 3 Will Western civilization become more plural or more of a “collage” or “mosaic” in the future? Why?

Task 2

There are two popular views about the history of Western civilization. One views it as “a triumphal story of progress” and the other views it as “a progressive decline,” as mentioned in the text in the Collection section. Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

The term “Golden Age” comes from Greek mythology and legend. It refers to the first in a sequence of four or five (or more) Ages of Man, in which the Golden Age is first, followed in sequence by the Silver, Bronze, Heroic, and then the present (Iron), which is a period of decline.

Western civilization is identified by the three major elements unique in world history: (1) the rise of the free market of ideas and the empirical sciences (实证科学); (2) the development of due process, equality before the law, ordered freedom in civil government, and liberal democracy; and (3) the rise of economic freedom.

- 1 What is the Golden Age like in Greek mythology? How do you think of the Age? Do you know any similar mythology in other cultures?
- 2 Do you agree with the major elements mentioned in the second paragraph about Western civilization? Do you have anything else to add to the list?
- 3 Compare and contrast the two views about the history of Western civilization (“a triumphal story of progress” vs. “a progressive decline”), illustrating your ideas with historical facts.

Task 3

Western civilization has been examined and interpreted in different ways. Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

There are different interpretations of Western civilization. Western civilization is an embodiment of various norms, values, religions, systems of government, heritages and customs. It combines elements of philosophy with the idea of free will, spiritual thinking and cultural traditions. The Metropolitan Museum of Art states Western Civilizations are those that were settled by individuals from Western and Central Europe, such as people in North and South America and Australia, which contributed to overall globalization. Occidental nations include those that speak English, French, Spanish, German and Portuguese.

- 1 What is your understanding of the scope of Western civilization?
- 2 From which perspective is Western civilization interpreted by the Metropolitan Museum of Art?
- 3 As listed above, there are different interpretations of Western civilization. Which interpretation are you most interested in? Why?

Task 4

Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

Some scholars use historical events to help define Western civilization. They examine the history of Western civilization to see how different cultures borrowed ideas from each other throughout time. American philosopher Frank S. Meyer (1909–1972), in an article for *Modern Age*, explains that the concept of “the West” began during the times of the Roman Empire and was later shaped by the ideologies of Christendom and teachings of the Holy Roman Empire. The ideologies that began with ancient civilizations were brought into the modern era via the conquests of new worlds, the invasions of others and sharing of transformation made possible by advancing modes of transportation.

- 1 From which perspective is Western civilization interpreted in this passage?
- 2 According to this passage and the text in the Collection section, how did the concept of “the West” come into being?
- 3 Does any similar situation occur to other civilizations in human history? Can you provide one or two examples?

Task 5

Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

The influence of the arts sometimes helps define Western civilization. Many of the arts popular today are distinctly Western in origin. The symphony and the opera, for example, both originated in Italy. Ballet, according to the Library of Congress, is a dance that originated in Western cultures. Today's pop culture has its roots in the classical arts that originated long ago in classic Western art. Other examples of art forms that are distinctly Western include soap operas, styles of architecture (like the skyscraper), oil paintings, and music (like jazz, blues, rock and rap music).

- 1 From which perspective is Western civilization interpreted in this passage? Do you agree with this approach?
- 2 How could the arts influence and help define a civilization?
- 3 Can you point out some art forms which could help define Eastern civilization?

REFLECTION

Task 1

Write a summary of about 300 words on the topic “What Is Western Civilization?” Your essay should cover:

- 1 the boundary between Europe and Asia;
- 2 how Western civilization took form;
- 3 the contributions and problems of Western civilization.

Task 2

The text in the Expansion section is about defining civilizations. What historical or cultural perspectives interest you most? Write an essay of about 300 words with the same title. Your essay should cover the following aspects.

- 1 A brief summary—your interpretation of civilization, highlighting different aspects of civilizations.
- 2 A list of two or three historical or cultural perspectives that interest you most. You may refer to perspectives mentioned in the tasks of the Exploration section as well as in the text of the Expansion section.
- 3 Illustrations of the importance of those perspectives to you. Try to explain specifically why you choose these perspectives.

Defining Civilizations⁵

- 1 Most world historians use the concept of civilization, but many are uncomfortable with it. In contrast, the Western civ⁶ tradition, launched by some scholars, tended to rest on assumptions that civilization had obvious meaning, as it contrasted with other, clearly inferior, types of human existence. Clearly, in order to deal with Western civilization sensibly, in a contemporary context, we need to clarify the meaning of the word: civilization.
- 2 Civilization has two meanings in world history. First, it describes a form of human organization. Second, it describes certain coherences that develop in certain regions as the basis for particular civilizations.

Civilization as a form of human organization

- 3 As a form of human organization, civilizations grow up in economies—all of them, initially, primarily agricultural—that generate considerable economic surplus. These economies may go through bad times, associated with failed harvests, and they can harbor massive poverty, but in most years there is enough surplus to support a relatively complex social and political structure and, often, some expensive cultural monuments.
- 4 Civilizations also have cities. Some cities can crop up in societies that are not otherwise civilizations, but civilizations produce more cities and more urban influence than other societies. It is vital to note that, in agricultural civilizations, most people remain rural. But cities capture a good bit of the economic surplus. They reflect and encourage trade, sending manufactured products and political services out in return for food. They usually promote additional cultural activities.
- 5 Most civilizations have writing. This allows record-keeping, which facilitates commercial transactions and political bureaucracies. Writing also provides new ways to record knowledge and so may promote new kinds of intellectual activities. Again, in most civilizations until recently, the majority of people remain illiterate. But writing is an important social tool nevertheless.

⁵

The text is adapted from Chapter Four in *Western Civilization in World History* written by Peter N. Stearns, published in 2003 by Routledge. The book is an essential guide for students and teachers of both Western civilization and world history, which points to a more integrated, comparative way of studying history. Peter N. Stearns (1936–) is Provost and Professor of History at George Mason University. He has taught Western civilization and world history for decades and has published widely on both, including *The Other Side of Western Civilization* (5th ed., 1999) and *Experiencing World History* (2000). He currently chairs the Advanced Placement World History Committee.

⁶

Short for Western civilization, usually referring to the college course.

- ⁶ Civilizations, finally, have formal states. Many societies can organize quite well without formal states, depending on local groupings and individual leaders. This is obviously true in most hunting and gathering societies, but there are stateless agricultural societies as well. States have some bureaucracies (even if quite small) as well as identified leadership.
- ⁷ Civilization, as a form of human organization, is not necessarily better than other forms. It often involves more social inequality than other forms. It may not produce more kindness or happiness. If by civilized we mean the capacity to be polite or altruistic, then it is vital to note that many non-civilized societies produce more courteous and generous people than many civilizations do. (Western civilization, as we will see, was long known as being rather crude.) Many civilizations, to be sure, look down on other societies as rude and primitive; some of these prejudices informed the early definitions of Western civilization. But we need to try to detach implications of superiority from the idea of civilization. Furthermore, many successful societies long continued without civilization. Herding societies in Central Asia, for example, thrived without the trappings of civilization until relatively recent centuries.
- ⁸ Most world historians would grant that Western civilization easily passes the definition test for civilization as a form of organization: It had cities, writing, states, social inequality, and surpluses. They would only urge that this does not mean that the West had therefore gained some edge over other kinds of societies, in terms of the quality of human existence. And they would insist that we remember to pay serious attention to other kinds of societies along with our focus on developments in places like the West.

Coherence and change of civilization

- ⁹ The second meaning of civilization focuses on coherence, and this aspect of the definition is crucial to the exploration of Western civ. Very early civilizations were usually confined to fairly small regions, often along river valleys where extra coordination made economic sense. But with time, some civilizations produced surplus populations, and increased military power, and in some cases offered attractive institutions and values, and so they tended to expand. Expansion frequently generated various kinds of conflict, but in the long run successful, enlarged civilizations spread enough common institutions and cultural values,

and often shared trading systems and social patterns, to create a certain amount of coherence throughout the expanded region.

¹⁰ Civilizations could also change. One of the really tricky aspects of using the civilization concept to designate coherences involves preventing it from becoming too rigid at one extreme, while also making sure that it still has some bearing over time. To have any useful meaning, civilizations should retain some identifiable features for many centuries. If a society totally changes stripes every fifty years, this would be important and fascinating but would probably swamp the civilization concept. In China, for example, it is legitimate to define an unusually strong interest in political order from about 500 B.C. onward. This entered into characteristic political institutions and into Confucian culture alike, and it survives into the 21st century even though the traditional empire is long gone. But China in the early 21st century, or even in the 15th century, is much different from the China of 200 A.D. Change and continuity operate in an important tension as part of the civilization concept when extended over time.

Challenges making a civilization hard to define

¹¹ Now, when it comes to coherences, Western civilization, rather than being unusually obvious, actually raises some unusual problems. This does not mean that the concept is invalid; but it does mean that assumptions about a simple narrative for the Western story are really off the mark.

¹² Most obviously, Western civilization almost never even came close to political unity. This is not unprecedented; Indian civilization was rarely united either. It is quite possible for a civilization to develop coherences in terms of shared values, trade networks, and some common political and social patterns. But there is no question that the coherences are more challenging when there is almost no shared political experience—and no question that, objectively, Western civ is harder to define, at almost any time period, than Chinese civilization is. We will also see that Western civilization moved around geographically more than most civilizations did. Again, this is not an insuperable problem, but it adds to the need to be very explicit about defining Westernness, rather than taking it for granted.

¹³ The change aspect is a challenge as well. One world historian once

argued that Western civilization had a greater capacity to change than did most other civilizations, and that this is really one of its defining features. This is worth debating. But, if true, it means that seeking the continuity aspect of Western civilization becomes particularly important, unless we should decide to talk about one Western civilization after another, Western civilizations rather than Western civ.

- ¹⁴ Different civilizations fall into different places on the coherence scale. Chinese civilization and, later, Middle Eastern/North African Islamic civilization are probably on the high side. This does not mean that they are better civilizations than others, just a bit easier to define from their points of origin onward. On the hard-to-define side comes Japan—was it a separate civilization or, because of its conscious imitation, a distinctive part of a larger East Asian civilization that had China as its progenitor? Or Latin America or Russia, which copy or have imposed so many elements from other civilizations but may nevertheless have definable civilizational identities of their own. Western civ is probably in the middle, in this scale of analytical difficulty, though a bit harder to identify on the whole than Indian civilization. This means that Western civ, far from being a story that can be captured by moving from one factual memorization task to another, is a set of questions, an invitation to analysis and to debate.

LECTURE 2

Society and Civilization

PRELUDE

A historian is a prophet in reverse.

—Friedrich von Schlegel

A nation that forgets its past can function no better than an individual with amnesia. —David McCullough

Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing,

stealing, shouting and doing the things historians usually record, while on the banks, unnoticed, people build homes, make love, raise children, sing songs, write poetry and even whittle statues. The story of civilization is the story of what happened on the banks. Historians are pessimists because they ignore the banks for the river. —Will Durant

When we read history, we may focus on kings, wars, and big events, etc. But when we study civilization, we would pay more attention to people, arts, architectures, and so on. What will happen when we study the history of Western civilization?

PREPARATION

Nowadays Western civilization is facing many challenges in the world. The sharpest questions are raised by feminists, black writers, and various left groups in the United States. Interesting enough, these questions are deeply rooted in as well as are a part of Western civilization. To understand the whole complicated situation, we should start from the very beginning of Western civilization—the ancient Greece. Among all its origins, ancient Greece plays an important role in putting the West in Western civilization. The character of ancient Greece helps define Western civilization.

“There can be no civilizations without the societies that support them and inspire their tensions and their progress.” This is a common sense as well as a basic idea in civilization studies. Simple as it may seem to be, the relationship between civilization and society has to be clarified before we scrutinize a particular civilization. Still, there is the relationship between culture and civilization. Understanding the relations between civilization and society, civilization and culture would be a good preparation for further study of Western civilization.

The West in Western Civilization¹

¹ This article is written in the 1990s. During that period of time, the study of Western civilization in American colleges was falling into decline. The course of Western Civilization was replaced by some newly-rising disciplines such as African American Study and Gender Study. Many scholars felt it was their responsibility to inform the public and especially the college students of the importance of the study of Western civilization. They defended the core values of the West, and argued for a place for the course of Western Civilization in a liberal arts education.

Necessity of understanding a civilization and clarifying the West in Western civilization

- ² Where did “Western” civilization come from? The term does not refer to any simple geographical location and did not exist until relatively recently. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Chesterton (1874–1936)² was the first to use the expression “Western man,” in 1907. How the notion came into existence explains a good deal about what “the West” represents. For many people, “the West” simply means Western Europe and countries of European origin such as the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand. But the non-European parts of the West, particularly America, have added to and altered the original cultural base. In addition, Western ways are spreading to other parts of the globe. Paradoxes of this kind make it necessary to inquire more carefully into exactly what we mean by “the West.”
- ³ Whatever else it may mean, Western civilization is the primary culture in the United States and in Europe. Yet this simple statement has begun to raise all sorts of **protests**. Many individuals and groups dominant in American society **identify** Western civilization with racism, slavery, **imperialism**, **colonialism**, **sexism**, environmental destruction, and other equally **repulsive** traits. Even more troubling, they do so without much acquaintance with the rich, varied, open and questing nature of what is best about the West.

alter /'ɔ:lta/ vt. 改变, 更改
 paradox /'pærədɒks/ n. 悖论, 似非而是的
 说法
 protest /prəʊtest/ n. 抗议
 identify... with... 将……等同于……；认
 为……与……紧密关联
 imperialism /ɪm'pɪərialɪzəm/ n. 帝国主义
 colonialism /kə'ləunіəlɪzəm/ n. 殖民主义;
 殖民政策
 sexism /'seksɪzɪzəm/ n. 性别偏见, 性别歧视
 repulsive /rɪ'pʌlsɪv/ adj. 令人厌恶的

1

The text is based on the keynote address at ISI's (Intercollegiate Studies Institute) 1997 Western Civilization Summit, "Who Put the West in Western Civilization?" written by Robert Royal.

2

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, better known as G. K. Chesterton, was a prolific journalist and author.

- ⁴ A civilization is not something we simply inherit or ever finally possess. Each generation, individually and collectively, needs to make a continual effort to **appropriate** it anew because a civilization is not passed along to us at birth. A civilization is an **elaborate** structure of ideas and institutions, slowly built up over time by the intelligence and effort of countless individuals working alone and together. If we fail to understand and **live out** that complexity, which tries to answer to the complexity of human life itself, we can easily fall back to a less human existence. It has happened often in history.

appropriate /ə'prəupriət/ *vt.* (通过学习而) 获得; 占用
 elaborate /'læbərət/ *adj.* 精心制作的; 详尽的
 live out 实践, 实现
 comprehensive /kəmprɪ'hensɪv/ *adj.* 综合性的; 全面的
 the Reformation *n.* (欧洲 16 世纪的) 宗教改革运动
 the Enlightenment *n.* (欧洲 18 世纪的) 启蒙运动
 ethnic /'eθnɪk/ *adj.* 种族的; 民族的
 complementary /,kɒmplɪ'mentəri/ *adj.* 补足的, 补充的
 spawn /spɔ:n/ *vt.* 酿成; 使大量产生
 unparalleled /ʌn'pærəleld/ *adj.* 无比的, 无双的
 evaporate /i'vepəreɪt/ *vi.* (情感或特性等) 消失, 逝去
 commentary /'kɒməntəri/ *n.* 评论; 注释

3

The Age of Discovery is a historical period of European global exploration that started in the early 15th century and lasted until the 17th century, during which European ships traveled around the world to search for new trading routes and partners.

4

The term “dead white males” (or “dead white men,” “dead white guys” etc.) criticizes the emphasis on high culture in Western civilization in academia (especially those in the United States). For a sophisticated commentary on this notion, see Bernard Knox, *The Oldest Dead White European Males: And Other Reflections on the Classic*, published in 1993 by W.W. Norton, New York.

Ancient Greece as the source of the West

- ⁵ At a minimum, any **comprehensive** account of the West would have to look at ancient Greece and Rome, the contributions of Judaism and Christianity, the Middle Ages (including the Age of Discovery⁵), the Renaissance, the **Reformation** and Counter-Reformation, the **Enlightenment**, and the current anti-Enlightenment mood in its several post-modernist forms. And this does not even begin to weigh the various **ethnic** and national contributions to the larger civilization. This essay cannot conduct such a survey. But just to list these **complementary** and conflicting currents should warn us that the West cannot be reduced to a few simple slogans.
- ⁶ In the anti-Western reading, the Greeks **spawned** the whole problem. In any balanced view, ancient Greece produced a series of great geniuses in rapid succession **unparalleled** in human history and later became the tutor of ancient Rome. Though Greek language and thought all but **evaporated** in the West for almost a thousand years—from before the fall of Rome to the early Renaissance—many labored to preserve as much as they could from the ancient Greek heritage. And when the Greek language became known again, people would turn back, century after century, to study Greek political thought, philosophy, art, architecture, and science.
- ⁷ Why? Not because the Greeks were the oldest Dead White European Males⁶. Europe (in the current sense of the term) did not yet exist when Greece flourished. Ancient Greek culture became part of later European culture because a variety of peoples in very different social circumstances simply found Greek achievements great. So did the high medieval Arabic civilization, which produced some interesting **commentaries** on Greek philosophy, even before the West. Greece, as we shall see, did not think

of itself as European, and by the time Europe arose, Greece lay on its margins. There were many reasons why Greek achievements could simply have been lost or left out of Europe.

Tradition of distinguishing East and West

- ⁸ Ancient Greece straddled Europe and Asia. The father of history, Herodotus (c. 484 B.C.–c.425 B.C.)⁵ began the tradition of distinguishing East and West in his *History* by characterizing the Persian invasion⁶ as a battle between Greeks and **Barbarians**. That **dichotomy** has drawn intense criticism, and not only from people who have never seriously considered the question. In *A Study of History*, the great British historian Arnold Toynbee (1889–1975) criticizes Herodotus for contributing to European **haughtiness** toward other civilizations. He points out that, in this case, the Easterners were far less barbaric than the so-called Westerners. Writing in the first half of the 20th century, Toynbee thought it urgent to **deflate** what he called “Modern Western **assumptions**.” But were he writing today⁷, Toynbee might feel the need to correct an equally exaggerated **denigration** of the West.
- ⁹ Europe’s borders were always uncertain. In the East, it has been difficult to say whether Turkey, Russia, and “Eastern Europe” are really European. In the West, Spain, as European a country as any, spent over 700 years under Islamic domination. And England and Ireland have been regarded—and sometimes regard themselves even now—as best thought of as not really part of continental Europe. Yet despite all uncertainty about its physical borders, “Europe” has an unmistakable cultural as well as a geographical meaning.
- ¹⁰ Aristotle (384 B.C.–322 B.C.) once wisely remarked that we should not expect greater precision in defining a subject than the subject itself allows. And in the *Politics*, he observes of East and West:
- Those who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they keep their freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of **subjection** and slavery. But the **Hellenic** race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent.*

straddle /'strædl/ vt. 横跨……的两边
barbarian /ba:'beəriən/ n. 野蛮人
dichotomy /daɪk'tɒmɪ/ n. 对立
haughtiness /'hɔ:tɪŋs/ n. 傲慢
deflate /di:'fleɪt/ vt. 揭穿
assumption /ə'sʌmpʃən/ n. 假定; 设想
denigration /,denɪ'greɪʃən/ n. 诋毁
subjection /səb'dʒekʃən/ n. 隶属; 服从; 征服
Hellenic /he'lēnɪk/ adj. 古希腊的

⁵ Herodotus, widely referred to as “The Father of History,” was the first historian known to collect his materials systematically and critically, and then to arrange them into a historiographic narrative.

⁶ There are two Persian invasions. The first Persian invasion of Greece, during the Persian Wars, began in 492 B.C., and ended with the decisive Athenian victory at the Battle of Marathon in 490 B.C. The invasion was ordered by the Persian King Darius I primarily in order to punish the city-states of Athens and Eretria. The second Persian invasion of Greece (480 B.C.–479 B.C.) occurred during the Greco-Persian Wars, as King Xerxes I of Persia sought to conquer all of Greece.

⁷ Here “today” refers to the 1990s. It was a time that Western civilization was facing severe challenges, some of which were not so fair.

The real value of Ancient Greece

- ¹¹ Today, of course, we do not put much confidence in geographic moralism⁸. But, for all the objections that can be raised against Herodotus or Aristotle, their intuitions proved historically right. The Greek ideal of liberty differed from that of surrounding peoples. For the Greeks, the virtue of self-control makes us fit to rule and to obey the rule of law; order in the soul answers to order in the world. This idea has flourished in the West as it has nowhere else. Indeed, it was only as the inhabitants of the “cold climate” of Europe centuries later made that idea their own that the West was set on its characteristic course.
- ¹² Today, the most common attacks on Greece come from familiar quarters. Feminists claim that the low status of Greek women overshadows other achievements. Black writers make similar arguments about Greek slavery. And leftists of various stripes argue that Plato (C.428 B.C.–348/347 B.C.) and Aristotle represent the ideology of a privileged class rather than the first steps toward discovering universal human nature and ethics. A grain of truth lurks in each of these charges, but, as with many criticisms laid against the West, the failure to see other truths and give them the correct relative weight renders such contentions largely null.
- ¹³ For the great Greeks were not uniquely evil in these matters. All ancient societies showed differences in the status of men and women and great economic gap among classes. Slavery existed in almost all premodern societies. A less ideologized approach would be more curious about how Greece opened up the path toward a political freedom correlated with human excellences. There are complicated historical reasons why we now think women are equal to men, slavery is an abomination, and opportunity should be available to all. But Greek thought about liberty, extended later to all human beings, is a crucial part of the story. That needs to be understood and defended from unconsidered attack—along with other Greek achievements in science and philosophy, poetry, drama, architecture, and art—because they begin a new chapter in human history.

8

The original words are French, *géographie moralisé*, meaning associating peoples’ spiritual status with their geographical location.

RECOLLECTION

- 1 Who first used the term “Western man”?
- 2 What does “the West” mean, according to the text?
- 3 In what way did American culture alter the original cultural base? Can you give some examples?
- 4 Why did the simple statement that “Western civilization is the primary culture in the United States” raise many protests?
- 5 What kind of group in American society would identify Western civilization with slavery?
- 6 Why does each generation need to appropriate a civilization anew?
- 7 Why can’t we simply inherit a civilization?
- 8 How does a civilization come into being, according to the text?
- 9 What content should a comprehensive account of the Western civilization cover at a minimal level?
- 10 How long did Greek language and thought disappear in the West before the Renaissance?
- 11 What does the expression “Dead White European Males” in Paragraph 7 mean?
- 12 Who started the tradition of distinguishing East and West? And how?
- 13 What was Arnold Toynbee’s criticism on Herodotus?
- 14 What was Aristotle’s observation of East and West? Do you agree? Why?
- 15 What are the most common attacks on Greece? Do you agree? Why?
- 16 What is the greatest contribution that Greece made to human beings?

Ancient Rome: A New Power Rises

Rome grew from a small town in 509 B.C. to the ruler of most of the Italian peninsula by 247 B.C. Throughout this era, Rome was constantly at war with one or more of its neighbors. At that time, when two cities went to war, the victorious army would destroy the conquered city and either kill or sell the citizens of the conquered city into slavery. The Roman model of conquest was different. Rome expanded its territory in part because they extended many of the rights of citizenship to the people they conquered. The Romans did not collect tribute from the people they conquered, but they did require their neighbors to provide soldiers for the Roman army. As a result, the Romans had a massive source of manpower to draw upon for their many wars.

The Roman army built roads that often made the conquered cities more prosperous. The soldiers spread Roman customs to their home villages once their service ended. In time, the Latin language of the area around Rome was spoken throughout the Italian peninsula. Many of our technological achievements, our ideas about law and government, and the words we use can be traced to the ancient Romans.

The Middle Ages: Between Ancient and Modern

In 476 A.D., warriors attacked the city of Rome and ended more than 800 years of glory for the “Eternal City.” Historians mark the fall of Rome as the end of ancient history. The next one thousand years were called the Middle Ages.

The beginning of the Middle Ages is often called the “Dark Ages” because the great civilizations of Greece and Rome had fallen. Life in western Europe during the Middle Ages was very hard. Very few people could read or write and nobody expected conditions to improve. The only hope for most people during the Middle Ages was their strong belief in Christianity, and the hope that life in heaven would be better than life on earth.

The Dark Ages were anything but dark in other parts of the world. The Muslims in the Middle East and North Africa studied and improved on the works of the ancient Greeks while civilization flourished in sub-Saharan Africa, China, India, and the Americas.

Europe began to experience great change by about 1450. Within one hundred years, Columbus sailed to America, literacy spread, scientists made great discoveries, and artists created work that still inspires us today. Historians call the next period of European history the “Renaissance,” or the “rebirth.” The Renaissance is the beginning of modern history.

The Renaissance

The Renaissance is a period in the history of Europe beginning in about 1400, following the Medieval period. “Renaissance” is a French word meaning “rebirth.” The period is called by this name because at that time, people started taking an interest in the learning of ancient times, in particular the learning of Ancient Greece and Rome. The Renaissance was seen as a “rebirth” of that learning.

During the Renaissance, there were many famous artists, many writers and many philosophers. Many people studied mathematics and different sciences. A person who is clever at a great number of things

is sometimes called a “Renaissance man.” Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), who was a painter, a scientist, a musician and a philosopher, is the most famous Renaissance man.

The Renaissance was a cultural movement that profoundly affected European intellectual life in the early modern period. Beginning in Italy and spreading to the rest of Europe by the 16th century, the Renaissance had its influence felt in literature, philosophy, art, music, politics, science, religion, and other aspects of intellectual inquiry. Renaissance scholars employed the humanist method in study, and searched for realism and human emotion in art.

The Reformation

The Protestant Reformation is a term used to describe a series of events that happened in the 16th century in the Christian Church. Because of corruption in the Catholic Church, some people saw a need to change the way it worked. People like Erasmus (1469–1536), Thomas More (1477–1535), Martin Luther (1483–1546) and John Calvin (1509–1564) saw this corruption, and acted to stop it. This led to

a schism in the church, into Catholics and a number of Protestant churches. The Protestant reformation triggered the Catholic Counter-Reformation.

In general, Martin Luther’s posting of the 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg (维滕贝格) is seen as the start of the Protestant Reformation. This happened in the year 1517. The Peace of Westphalia (威斯特伐利亚和约) of 1648 recognized Protestants, and is generally seen as the end of this process.

The Reformation was a many-sided movement, but in the main, it was a revolt of the northern nations against the dominion of Rome. The princes of the northern nations perceived that, if the Church in their territories became merely national, they would be able to dominate it. Therefore Luther’s theological innovations were welcomed by rulers and peoples alike throughout the greater part of northern Europe.

Catholic countries such as Spain and Mexico for a long time forbade Protestants to immigrate, and Protestant countries sometimes forbade Catholics. Protestants are also influential in the United States and the English Canada.

EXPLORATION

Task 1

As alluded in the Collection section, traditional curriculum was accused of putting too much weight on “Dead White European Males.” Read the comment on traditional and multicultural curriculums, and discuss the questions below it.

Philosopher John Searle argued that “intelligently taught social and political histories” should address “those that have been treated unjustly. It is important, however, to get rid of the ridiculous notion that there is something embarrassing or lamentable (可叹的，令人失望的) about the fact that most of the prominent political and intellectual leaders of our culture over the past two thousand years or so have been white males. This is just a historical fact whose causes should be explored and understood. To deny it or attempt to suppress the works of such thinkers is not simply racism, it is unintelligent.”

Multicultural curriculum taught basic facts about different cultures, often on specially designated culture days or holidays, rather than being systematically infused into the entire curriculum. While this did increase students’ superficial knowledge of other cultures, some people within the movement wanted students to know why they didn’t know about other cultures and why certain people of certain ethnicities and classes are less likely to be economically successful. The objectives of the anti-bias curriculum are to raise awareness of bias and to reduce bias. Instead of presenting the culturally dominant view of a subject, idea, history, or person, the anti-bias curriculum presents all possible sides. It claims to allow students to see the whole view of the subject. Students will be able to analyze the topic from different perspectives and see why and how different groups have different views of the subject.

- 1 Is it possible to be objective in the study of a civilization?
- 2 What curriculum do you prefer to have? Why?

Task 2

Ancient Greece is generally believed to be the cradle of Western civilization. Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

The people of ancient Greece could not farm most of their mountainous, rocky land, so they became excellent sailors who traveled to distant places. Greek sailors learned from many different cultures and spread their ideas far from their home. Greek sailors learned the alphabet from seafaring Phoenicians (腓尼基人) of modern-day Syria and Lebanon.

- 1 According to the passage, what is the main trait of ancient Greek culture? How did it come into being?
- 2 According to your understanding, how did the trait of ancient Greek culture affect the Western civilization?
- 3 Greek sailors learned from many different cultures. Can you provide one or two examples? You may search online for information.

Task 3

Read the excerpt from the text in the Collection section, and discuss the questions below it.

And in the *Politics*, he (Aristotle) observes of East and West:

Those who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they keep their freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery. But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent.

- 1 When Aristotle uses the term “Europe” here, what part of the world does he refer to?
- 2 When Aristotle says that the Asian people “are wanting in spirit,” what does he mean?
- 3 Do you agree with Aristotle on different characters of peoples? Why?

Task 4

Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

The Renaissance began in northern Italy and then spread through Europe. Italian cities such as Naples (那不勒斯), Genoa (热那亚), and Venice became centers of trade between Europe and the Middle East. Arab scholars preserved the writings of the ancient Greeks in their libraries. When the Italian cities traded with the Arabs, ideas were exchanged along with goods. These ideas, preserved from the ancient past, served as the basis of the Renaissance. When the Byzantine Empire (拜占庭帝国) fell to Muslim Turks in 1453, many Christian scholars left Greece for Italy.

- 1 Why did the Renaissance begin in northern Italy?
- 2 How did cultures affect each other?
- 3 Try to find some more information about the Renaissance and discuss the impact of the Renaissance on Western civilization.

Task 5

Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are monotheistic faiths practiced by about half of the world's population. Monotheism refers to the belief in one God. The three faiths are often called Western religions to distinguish them from the Eastern religions practiced primarily in Asia. Believers in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are found on every populated continent, but tend to be concentrated in North and South America, Europe, Australia, Western Asia, and North Africa.

- 1 Religion is one of the most important factors of Western civilization. How much do you know about the three main religions practiced in the West?
- 2 Try to find some more information about these three religions and discuss their similarities and differences.
- 3 How could believers of different religions make peace in the world?

REFLECTION

Task 1

Write a summary of about 300 words on the topic "The West in Western Civilization." Your essay should cover:

- 1 a minimum comprehensive account of the term "the West";
- 2 how ancient Greece influenced the West;
- 3 the different opinions held by Western historians on the term "the West."

Task 2

The text in the Expansion section is about civilizations and societies. How do you understand the relation between civilizations and societies? Write an essay of about 300 words with the same title. Your essay should cover:

- 1 a brief summary—your understanding of civilization, highlighting the relation between civilization and society;
- 2 the relations between civilization and society, civilization and culture;
- 3 illustrating these relations with examples.

Civilizations as Societies⁹

- ¹ There can be no civilizations without the societies that support them and inspire their tensions and their progress. Hence the first inevitable question: Was it necessary to invent the word “civilization” and encourage its academic use, if it remains merely a synonym for “society”? Arnold Toynbee continually used the word “society” in place of “civilization.” And Marcel Mauss (1872–1950)¹⁰ believed that “the idea of civilization is certainly less clear than that of society, which it presupposes.”
- ² Society and civilization are inseparable: The two ideas refer to the same reality. Or, as Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009) put it, “they do not represent different objects, but two complementary views of a single object, which can perfectly well be described by either term according to one’s point of view.”
- ³ The idea of society implies a wealth of content. In this it closely resembles that of civilization, with which it is so often linked. The Western civilization in which we live, for example, depends on the “industrial society” which is its driving force. It would be easy to characterize Western civilization simply by describing that society and its component parts, its tensions, its moral and intellectual values, its ideals, its habits, its tastes, etc.—in other words by describing the people who embody it and who will pass it on.
- ⁴ If a society stirs and changes, the civilization based on it stirs and changes too. This point is made in a fine book by Lucien Goldmann (1913–1970)¹¹, *The Hidden God*, which deals with the France of Louis XIV (1638–1715). Every civilization, Goldmann explains, draws its essential insights from the “view of the world” it adopts. And in every case this view of the world is colored, if not determined, by social tensions. Civilization simply reflects them like a mirror.
- ⁵ The age of Jansenism¹² was, as *The Hidden God* shows, an impassioned moment in the history of France; and the tragic view of the world that

⁹

The text is adapted from Section 2, Chapter I in *A History of Civilizations* written by Fernand Braudel. The book is translated by Richard Mayne, published in America in 1994 by Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Books U.S.A. Inc. Fernand Braudel (1902–1985) was a French historian and a leader of the Annales School, and has been considered one of the greatest of the modern historians.

¹⁰

Marcel Mauss was a French sociologist. Mauss’ academic work traversed the boundaries between sociology and anthropology. Mauss had a significant influence upon the founder of structural anthropology, Claude Lévi-Strauss.

¹¹

Lucien Goldmann was a French philosopher and sociologist of Jewish-Romanian origin.

¹²

Jansenism was a Catholic theological movement, primarily in France, which emphasized original sin, human depravity, the necessity of divine grace, and predestination. The movement originated from the posthumously published work of the Dutch theologian Cornelius Jansen, who died in 1638. Through the 17th and into the 18th centuries, Jansenism was a distinct movement within the Catholic Church.

prevailed then had originated with the parliamentary upper middle classes, disillusioned by the monarchy with which they were at odds. The tragedy of their fate, their awareness of it, and their intellectual ascendancy all combined to imbue the period with their own dominant mood.

- ⁶ In a quite different spirit, Claude Lévi-Strauss also identifies civilizations with societies when he argues the difference between primitive and modern societies—or, as most anthropologists put it, between cultures and civilizations. Cultures in this sense are societies which produce little disorder, and tend to remain indefinitely as they originally were, which is why they look to us like societies that lack both history and progress; whereas our societies (those that correspond to modern civilizations) are powered by a difference of electrical pressure, as it were, expressed in various forms of social hierarchy. Such societies have managed to establish within them a social imbalance which they use to produce both much greater order—we have societies that work like machines—and much greater disorder in relations between people.
- ⁷ For Lévi-Strauss, then, primitive cultures are the fruit of egalitarian societies, where relations between groups are settled once and for all and remain constant, whereas civilizations are based on hierarchical societies with wide gaps between groups and hence shifting tensions, social conflicts, political struggles, and continual evolution.
- ⁸ The most obvious external sign of these differences between cultures and civilizations is undoubtedly the presence or absence of towns. Towns proliferate in civilizations: In cultures they remain in their very early stage of development. There are of course intermediate stages and degrees. What is Sub-Saharan Africa but a group of traditional societies—of cultures—embarking on the difficult and sometimes cruel process of fostering civilization and modern urban development? African cities, taking their models from abroad in a style now international, remain islands amid the stagnation of the countryside. They prefigure the society and the civilization to come.
- ⁹ The most brilliant societies and civilizations, however, presuppose within their own borders cultures and societies of a more elementary kind. Take, for example, the interplay of town and country, never to be underestimated. In no society have all regions and all parts of the population developed equally. Underdevelopment is common in

mountain areas or patches of poverty off the beaten track of modern communications—genuinely primitive societies, true “cultures” in the midst of a civilization.

- ¹⁰ The West’s first success was certainly the conquest of its countryside—its peasant “cultures”—by the towns. In the Islamic world, the duality remains more visible than in the West. Islamic towns were quicker to arise—were more precociously urban, so to speak—than in Europe, while the countryside remained more primitive, with vast areas of nomadic life. In the Far East, that contrast is still the general rule: Its “cultures” remain very isolated, living by themselves and on their own resources. Between the most brilliant cities lie tracts of countryside whose way of life is almost self-sufficient, at subsistence level, and sometimes actually barbaric.
- ¹¹ Given the close relationship between civilization and society, there is a case for adopting the sociological mode when looking at the long history of civilizations. As historians, however, we should not simply confuse societies with civilizations. We shall explain what we believe the difference to be: In terms of the time-scale, civilization implies and embraces much longer periods than any given social phenomenon. It changes far less rapidly than the societies it supports or involves.

LECTURE 3

The Prospect of Civilization

PRELUDE

As soon as histories are properly told there is no more need of romances. —Walt Whitman

Crimes of which a people is ashamed constitute its real history. The same is true of man. —Jean Genet

Each age tries to form its own conception of the past. Each age writes the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time. —Frederick Jackson Turner

How do we learn from the past? How does the past give meaning to the present? And how does the present determine the future?

PREPARATION

Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations?" was written in response to his former student Francis Fukuyama's 1992 book, *The End of History and the Last Man*. Both try to discuss where the present development of human civilizations would bring us. Fukuyama borrows a key idea from Hegel (1770–1831) and develops Kojève's (1902–1968) interpretation of it. He believes that there would be a time when the whole human society will get a "universal homogenous state (同质状态)," in other words, the end of history. In response to the views, Huntington believes that the clash of civilizations would not disappear in recent future; on the contrary, it would replace the clash of princes, nation states, and ideologies, and become the most important pattern of international affairs.

In recent years, the theory of Dialogue among Civilizations, a response to Huntington's theory of the Clash of Civilizations, has become the center of some international attention. The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) was established at the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations in 2005. The Alliance is intended to encourage collective action across diverse societies to combat extremism, to overcome cultural and social barriers and promote understanding between countries and identity groups, and to reduce the tensions and polarization between societies which differ in religious and cultural values.

The Clash of Civilizations?¹

The next pattern of conflict

- 1 World politics is entering a new phase, and intellectuals have not hesitated to proliferate visions of what it will be—the end of history, the return of traditional rivalries between nation states, and the decline of the nation state from the conflicting pulls of tribalism and globalism, among others. Each of these visions catches aspects of the emerging reality. Yet they all miss a crucial, indeed a central, aspect of what global politics is likely to be in the coming years.
- 2 It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.

Patterns of conflicts in history

- 3 Conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world. For a century and a half after the emergence of the modern international system with the Peace of Westphalia², the conflicts of the Western world were largely among princes—emperors, absolute monarchs and constitutional monarchs attempting to expand their bureaucracies, their armies, their mercantilist economic strength and, most important, the territory they ruled. In the process they created nation states, and beginning with the French Revolution the principal lines of conflict were between nations rather than princes. In 1793, as R. R. Palmer (1909–2002)³ put it, “The wars of kings were over; the wars of peoples had begun.” This 19th-century pattern lasted until the end of World War I. Then, as a result of the Russian Revolution and the reaction against it, the conflict of nations yielded to the conflict of ideologies, first among communism, fascism-

phase /feɪz/ *n.* 阶段

proliferate /prə'lifəreɪt/ *vi.* 激增

tribalism /'traɪbəl-izəm/ *n.* 部落制度

hypothesis /haɪ'poθɪsɪs/ *n.* 假设, 假说

fault line *n.* 断层线

monarch /'mɒnək/ *n.* 君主, 国王; 女王

mercantilist /'mɜ:kəntɪlɪst/ *adj.* 商业主义的; 营利主义的

¹

The text is adapted from "The Clash of Civilizations?" from *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, written in 1993 by Samuel P. Huntington, Samuel Phillips Huntington (1927–2008) was an influential American political scientist whose works include "The Clash of Civilizations?" and *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of Order* (1996).

²

The Peace of Westphalia was a series of peace treaties signed between May and October, 1648, which brought to an end the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Dutch (1568–1648) and the German phase of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). These treaties started a new system of political order in central Europe. They are based upon the concept of a sovereign state governed by a sovereign and against interference in nations' domestic business.

³

Robert Roswell Palmer, was a distinguished American historian at Princeton and Yale universities, who specialized in 18th-century France.

Nazism and liberal democracy, and then between communism and liberal democracy. During the Cold War, this latter conflict became embodied in the struggle between the two superpowers, neither of which was a nation state in the classical European sense and each of which defined its identity in terms of its ideology.

- ⁴ These conflicts between princes, nation states, and ideologies were primarily conflicts within Western civilization, “Western civil wars”, as William Lind (1947–)⁵ has labeled them. This was as true of the Cold War as it was of the world wars and the earlier wars of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. With the end of the Cold War, international politics moves out of its Western phase, and its center-piece becomes the interaction between the West and non-Western civilizations and among non-Western civilizations. In the politics of civilizations, the peoples and governments of non-Western civilizations no longer remain the objects of history as targets of Western colonialism but join the West as movers and shapers of history.

The nature of civilizations

- ⁵ During the Cold War the world was divided into the First, Second and Third Worlds. Those divisions are no longer relevant. It is far more meaningful now to group countries not in terms of their political or economic systems or in terms of their level of economic development but rather in terms of their culture and civilization.
- ⁶ What do we mean when we talk of a civilization? A civilization is a cultural entity. Villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups, all have distinct cultures at different levels of cultural heterogeneity. The culture of a village in southern Italy may be different from that of a village in northern Italy, but both will share in a common Italian culture that distinguishes them from German villages. European communities, in turn, will share cultural features that distinguish them from Arab or Chinese communities. Arabs, Chinese and Westerners, however, are not part of any broader cultural entity. They constitute civilizations. A civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people. People have levels of identity: A resident of Rome may define himself

embody /ɪm'baʊdi/ vt. 代表,体现 (思想或品

质)

identity /aɪ'dentɪti/ n. 身份

entity /'entɪti/ n. 实体

heterogeneity /hetərəʊdʒ'niːti/ n. 异质性,

不均匀性

constitute /'kɒnstɪtju:t/ vt. 组成, 构成

self-identification /'selfaɪ,dentifi'keɪʃn/ n.

自我认同

4

William S. Lind is an American expert on military affairs and a pundit on cultural conservatism.

with varying degrees of **intensity** as a Roman, an Italian, a Catholic, a Christian, a European, a Westerner. The civilization to which he belongs is the broadest level of identification with which he intensely identifies. People can and do redefine their identities and, as a result, the **composition** and boundaries of civilizations change.

- ⁷ Civilizations may involve a large number of people, as with China, or a very small number of people, such as the **Anglophone Caribbean**. A civilization may include several nation states, as is the case with Western, Latin American and Arab civilizations, or only one, as is the case with Japanese civilization. Civilizations obviously **blend** and **overlap**, and may include subcivilizations. Western civilization has two major **variants**, European and North American, and Islam has its Arab, Turkic and Malay subdivisions. Civilizations are nonetheless meaningful entities, and while the lines between them are seldom sharp, they are real. Civilizations are **dynamic**; they rise and fall; they divide and merge. And, as any student of history knows, civilizations disappear and are buried in the sands of time.
- ⁸ Westerners tend to think of nation states as the principal actors in global affairs. They have been that, however, for only a few centuries. The broader reaches of human history have been the history of civilizations. In *A Study of History*, Arnold Toynbee identified 21 major civilizations; only six of them exist in the contemporary world.

Why civilizations will clash

- ⁹ Civilization identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, **Slavic-Orthodox**, Latin American and possibly African civilization. The most important conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another.
- ¹⁰ As people define their identity in ethnic and religious terms, they are likely to see an “us” versus “them” relation existing between themselves and people of different ethnicity or religion. The end of ideologically defined states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union permits traditional ethnic identities and hatred to come to the fore. Differences in culture and religion create differences over policy issues, ranging from

intensity /ɪn'tens̩ti/ *n.* 强度

composition /kɒmpo'zɪʃn/ *n.* 组成, 构成
the Anglophone /'æŋgləfən/

Caribbean 以英语为母语的加勒比海人
blend /blend/ *vt.* 融合

overlap /əʊvə'læp/ *v.* 与 (某物) 部分重叠,
交搭

variant /'veəriənt/ *n.* 变体

dynamic /dai'næmɪk/ *adj.* 不断变化的, 动态的

Slavic-Orthodox /'sla:vɪk'ɔ:θədɒks/ 斯拉夫—东正教

human rights to immigration to trade and commerce to the environment. Geographical **propinquity** gives rise to conflicting territorial claims. Most important, the efforts of the West to promote its values of democracy and liberalism to be universal values, to maintain its military predominance and to advance its economic interests **engender** countering responses from other civilizations. Decreasingly able to **mobilize** support and form **coalitions** on the basis of ideology, governments and groups will increasingly attempt to mobilize support by appealing to common religion and civilization identity.

propinquity /prə'pɪŋkwɪti/ *n.* (空间上的)

接近; 邻近

engender /ɪn'dʒendə/ *vt.* 引起, 产生 (某种情形或感觉)

mobilize /'məubɪlaɪz/ *vt.* 组织; 鼓动; 动员

coalition /kəʊə'lɪʃən/ *n.* 联盟, 同盟

adjacent /ə'dʒesənt/ *adj.* 邻近的, 毗连的

- ¹¹ The clash of civilizations thus occurs at two levels. At the micro-level, **adjacent** groups along the fault lines between civilizations struggle, often violently, over the control of territory and each other. At the macro-level, states from different civilizations compete for relative military and economic power, struggle over the control of international institutions and third parties, and competitively promote their particular political and religious values.

RECOLLECTION

- 1 In the text, the author said "World politics is entering a new phase." Do you agree with that? Why?
- 2 How many visions about world politics are mentioned in the text? Among all the visions, which one do you think is most convincing? Why?
- 3 According to the author, what is the central aspect of global politics in the coming years? Do you agree?
- 4 How do you understand the statement "The wars of kings were over; the wars of peoples had begun"?
- 5 In the period when the main conflicts in the world were labeled as "Western civil wars", what was happening in the East?
- 6 How much do you know about the First, Second and Third Worlds? Why does the author say that those divisions are no longer relevant?
- 7 People have levels of identity. How do you identify yourself?
- 8 What are common objective elements of one's civilization identity?
- 9 What is the subjective self-identification of people in a cultural sense?
- 10 What will happen when people redefine their identities?
- 11 What are the two major variants of Western civilization?
- 12 How long have nation states been principal actors in global affairs?
- 13 How many major civilizations identified by Arnold Toynbee still exist in the contemporary world?
- 14 What are the major civilizations in the contemporary world?
- 15 Do you agree with Huntington's theory of the Clash of Civilizations? Why or why not?

Huntington's Major Civilizations

To understand the concept of the Clash of Civilizations, we have to know the major civilizations which are different from each other and may conflict with each other. Huntington divided the world into several “major civilizations” in his 1996 book *the Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.

- 1 **Sinic.** All scholars recognize the existence of either a single distinct Chinese civilization dating back at least to 1500 B.C. and perhaps to 1000 years earlier, or of two Chinese civilizations one succeeding the other in the early centuries of the Christian epoch. It is more accurate to use the term “Sinic” to describe the common culture of China and the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and elsewhere outside China.
- 2 **Japanese.** Some scholars combine Japanese and Chinese culture under the heading of a single Far Eastern civilization. Most, however, do not and instead recognize Japan as a distinct civilization which was the offspring of Chinese civilization, emerging during the period between 100 A.D. and 400 A.D.
- 3 **Hindu.** One or more successive civilizations, it is universally recognized, have existed on the Subcontinent since at least 1500 B.C. These are generally referred to as Indian, Indic, or Hindu, with the last term being preferred for the most recent civilization.
- 4 **Islamic.** All major scholars recognize the existence of a distinct Islamic civilization. Originating in the

Arabian peninsula in the 7th century A.D., Islam rapidly spread across North Africa and the Iberian peninsula and also eastward into central Asia, the Subcontinent, and Southeast Asia. As a result, many distinct cultures or subcivilizations exist within Islam, including Arab, Turkic, Persian, and Malay.

- 5 **Western.** Western civilization is usually dated as emerging about 700 A.D. or 800 A.D. It is generally viewed by scholars as having three major components, in Europe, North America, and Latin America.
- 6 **Latin American.** Latin America, however, has a distinct identity which differentiates it from the West. Although an offspring of European civilization, Latin America has evolved along every different path from Europe and North America.
- 7 **African (possibly).** Most major scholars of civilization except Braudel (1902–1985) do not recognize a distinct African civilization. The north of the African continent and its east coast belong to Islamic civilization. Historically, Ethiopia constituted a civilization of its own. Elsewhere European imperialism and settlements brought elements of Western civilization.

Why Civilizations will Clash

Huntington offers in his 1996 book six main explanations for why civilizations will clash.

- 1 Differences among civilizations are too basic because civilizations differ from each other by history, language, culture, tradition, and, most important, religion. These fundamental differences are the product of centuries, so they will not soon disappear.

- 2 The world is becoming a smaller place. As a result, the interactions across the world are increasing, and they intensify civilization awareness of differences between civilizations and commonalities within civilizations.
- 3 Due to the economic modernization and social change, people are separated from longstanding local identities. Instead, religion has replaced this gap. It provides a basis for identity and commitment that transcends national boundaries and unites civilizations.
- 4 The growth of civilization consciousness is enhanced by the dual role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at a peak of power. At the same time, a return-to-the-roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilizations. A West at the peak of its power confronts non-Western countries that increasingly have the desire, the will, and the resources to shape the world in non-Western ways.
- 5 Cultural characteristics and differences are less changeable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones.
- 6 Economic regionalism (经济地区主义) is increasing. Successful economic regionalism will reinforce civilization-consciousness. Economic regionalism may succeed only when it is rooted in a common civilization.

The West vs. the Rest

Huntington suggests that in the future the central axis of world politics tends to be the conflict between Western and non-Western civilizations, the conflict between “the West and the Rest.” He offers in his 1996 book three forms of general actions that non-Western civilization can take in response to Western countries.

- 1 Non-Western countries can attempt to achieve isolation in order to preserve their own values and protect themselves from Western invasion. However, Huntington argues that the costs of this course are high and few states have pursued it exclusively.
- 2 Non-Western countries can join the West and accept its values and institutions.
- 3 Non-Western countries can make an effort to balance Western power through modernization. They can develop economic, military power and cooperate with other non-Western countries against the West while still preserving their own values and institutions.

Huntington believes that the increasing power of non-Western civilizations in international society will make the West begin to develop a better understanding of the cultural fundamentals underlying other civilizations. Therefore, Western civilization will cease to be regarded as “universal” but different civilizations will learn to coexist and join to shape the future world.

EXPLORATION

Task 1

Huntington's theory of the clash of civilizations aroused many criticisms. Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

In his 2003 book *Terror and Liberalism*, Paul Berman argues that distinct cultural boundaries do not exist in the present day. He argues there is no “Islamic civilization” nor a “Western civilization,” and that the evidence for a civilization clash is not convincing, especially when considering relationships such as that between the United States and Saudi Arabia. In addition, he cites the fact that many Islamic radicals spent a significant amount of time living and/or studying in the Western world. According to Berman, conflict arises because of philosophical beliefs that various groups share (or do not share), regardless of cultural or religious identity.

- 1 What is the difference between a civilization clash and conflict of philosophical beliefs?
- 2 Try and find some more information about the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia, and discuss why it is the instance proving that the evidence for a civilization clash is not convincing.
- 3 Is there a civilization clash or not, in your opinion? Illustrate your opinion with facts.

Task 2

The following are two pieces of criticism on Huntington's thesis. Read the passage, and discuss the questions below it.

Edward Said issued a response to Huntington's thesis in his 2001 article “The Clash of Ignorance.” Said argues that Huntington's categorization of the world's fixed “civilizations” omits the dynamic interdependency and interaction of culture. A longtime critic of the Huntingtonian paradigm, and an outspoken proponent of Arab issues, Edward Said in his book *From Oslo to Iraq and the Road Map* also argues that the thesis “The Clash of civilizations?” is an example of “the purest invidious (令人厌恶的) racism,” “a sort of parody (拙劣模仿) of Hitlerian science directed uniquely today against Arabs and Muslims.”

Noam Chomsky has criticized the concept of the Clash of Civilizations as just being a new justification for the United States “for any atrocities (暴行) that they wanted to carry out,” which was required after the Cold War as the former Soviet Union was no longer a viable threat.

- 1 What is the tone of these two paragraphs? What is the difference between academic discussion and political vituperation (辱骂)?
- 2 Do you think the criticisms in the passage are objective? Why?
- 3 It is pretty common that scholars make completely opposite remarks on a same cultural issue. Discuss the thesis “The Clash of Civilizations?” in group, figure out your own stand and explain why you take that stand.

Task 3

Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations?" was written in response to his former student Francis Fukuyama's 1992 book, *The End of History and the Last Man*. Read the passage about the concept of the end of history, and discuss the questions below it.

The end of history is a political and philosophical concept. It supposes that a particular political, economic or social system may develop that would constitute the end point of humanity's sociocultural evolution and the final form of human government. Various forms of systems have been proposed to meet this definition, as posited (设想) by Thomas More in *Utopia*, Hegel, Karl Marx, Vladimir Solovyov and Francis Fukuyama. Fukuyama published a 1989 essay, "The End of History?" in the international-affairs journal *The National Interest*, proposing that the advent (出现) of Western liberal democracy represented this end point. Fukuyama expanded this essay in his 1992 book, *The End of History and the Last Man*.

- 1 How do you understand the concept of the end of history?
- 2 Among all forms of systems proposed by different scholars (Thomas More, Hegel, Karl Marx, Solovyov and Fukuyama), which one you think is the most likely end of history? Why?
- 3 Compare the two concepts—the end of history and the Clash of Civilizations,” and discuss which is more convincing? Why? How do you think of the contemporary world concerning the two concepts? Try to clarify your idea.

Task 4

Read the passage about the First, Second and Third Worlds, and discuss the questions below it.

After World War II the world split into two large geopolitical blocs (集团) and spheres of influence with contrary views on government and the politically correct society: the bloc of democratic-industrial countries within the American influence sphere, the “First World”; and the Eastern bloc of the communist-socialist states, the “Second World.”

The remaining states, with three-quarters of the world's population and not aligned with either bloc, were regarded as the “Third World.”

- 1 What makes a country a Third World one? Can you list out some Third World countries?
- 2 In the passage in the Collection section, the author stated that the divisions between the Worlds are no longer relevant. Do you agree? Why?
- 3 Try and find more information about Saudi Arabia, and discuss why rich Saudi Arabia is a Third World country.

REFLECTION

Task 1

Write a summary of about 300 words on the topic “The Clash of Civilizations.” Your essay should cover:

- 1 the concept of the Clash of Civilizations;
- 2 the nature of civilizations;
- 3 why civilizations will clash.

Task 2

The text in the Expansion section is about the concept of the end of history. It represents a completely different view on the prospect of world history. Write an essay of about 300 words with the same title. Your essay should cover:

- 1 your interpretation of the concept of the end of history;
- 2 your understanding of Hegel’s theory, Kojève’s development of the notion, and Fukuyama’s proposition;
- 3 your idea of what will happen at the end of history.

The End of History?⁵

The notion of the end of history

¹ The notion of the end of history is not an original one. Its best known propagator (宣传者) was Karl Marx (1818–1883), who believed that the direction of historical development was a purposeful one determined by the interplay of material forces, and would come to an end only with the achievement of a communist utopia that would finally resolve all prior contradictions.⁶ But the concept of history as a dialectical (辩证的) process with a beginning, a middle, and an end was borrowed by Marx from his great German predecessor, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831).⁷

² For better or worse, much of Hegel's historicism has become part of our contemporary intellectual baggage. The notion that mankind has progressed through a series of primitive stages of consciousness on his path to the present, and that these stages corresponded to concrete forms of social organization, such as tribal, slave-owning, theocratic (神权的), and finally democratic-egalitarian societies, has become inseparable from the modern understanding of man. Hegel was the first philosopher to speak the language of modern social science, insofar as man for him was the product of his concrete historical and social environment and not, as earlier natural right theorists would have it, a collection of more or less fixed “natural” attributes. The mastery and transformation of man's natural environment through the application of science and technology was originally not a Marxist concept, but a Hegelian one. Unlike later historicists whose historical relativism degenerated into relativism tout court, however, Hegel believed that history culminated in an absolute moment—a moment in which a final, rational form of society and state became victorious.

³ The state that emerges at the end of history is liberal insofar as it recognizes and protects through a system of law man's universal right to freedom, and democratic insofar as it exists only with the consent of the governed. For Kojève⁸, this so-called “universal homogenous state” found

5

This article is adapted from a lecture presented at the University of Chicago's John M. Olin Center in 1989. Yoshihiro Francis Fukuyama (1952–) is an American writer and political theorist, best known for his belief that the triumph of liberal democracy at the end of the Cold War marked the last ideological stage in the progression of human history.

6

Fukuyama has been criticized for the claim in Chinese academia owing to his misunderstanding of Marxism.

7

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was a German philosopher, and a major figure in German Idealism. His historicist and idealist account of reality revolutionized European philosophy.

8

Alexandre Kojève was a Russian-born French philosopher and statesman whose philosophical seminars had an immense influence on 20th-century French philosophy.

real life embodiment in the countries of postwar Western Europe—precisely those flabby, prosperous, self-satisfied, inward-looking, weak-willed states whose grandest project was nothing more heroic than the creation of the Common Market.⁹ But this was only to be expected. For human history and the conflict that characterized it was based on the existence of “contradictions”: primitive man’s quest for mutual recognition, the dialectic of the master and slave, the transformation and mastery of nature, the struggle for the universal recognition of rights, and the dichotomy between proletarian (无产者) and capitalist. But in the universal homogenous state, all prior contradictions are resolved and all human needs are satisfied. There is no struggle or conflict over “large” issues, and consequently no need for generals or statesmen; what remains is primarily economic activity.

- ⁴ To comprehend how Kojève could have been so audacious as to assert that history has ended, we must first of all understand the meaning of Hegelian idealism.

Hegelian idealism

- ⁵ For Hegel, the contradictions that drive history exist first of all in the realm of human consciousness, i.e. on the level of ideas¹⁰—not the trivial election year proposals of American politicians, but ideas in the sense of large unifying world views that might best be understood under the rubric of ideology. Ideology in this sense is not restricted to the secular and explicit political doctrines we usually associate with the term, but can include religion, culture, and the complex of moral values underlying any society as well.

- ⁶ For Hegel, all human behavior in the material world, and hence all human history, is rooted in a prior state of consciousness—an idea similar to the one expressed by John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946)¹¹ when he said that the views of men of affairs were usually derived from defunct (不再存在的) economists and academic scribblers (二流作家) of earlier generations. This consciousness may not be explicit and self-aware, as are modern political doctrines, but may rather take the form of religion or simple cultural or moral habits. And yet this realm of consciousness in the long run necessarily becomes manifest in the material world, indeed creates the material world in its own image. Consciousness is cause and not effect, and can develop autonomously from the material world; hence the real subtext underlying the apparent jumble of current events is the history of ideology.

9

Kojève alternatively identified the end of history with the postwar "American way of life," toward which he thought the former Soviet Union was moving as well.

10

This notion was expressed in the famous aphorism from the preface to the *Philosophy of History* to the effect that "everything that is rational is real, and everything that is real is rational."

11

John Maynard Keynes was a British economist whose ideas have fundamentally affected the theory and practice of modern macroeconomics.

⁷ For Kojève, as for all good Hegelians, understanding the underlying processes of history requires understanding developments in the realm of consciousness or ideas, since consciousness will ultimately remake the material world in its own image. To say that history ended in 1806 meant that mankind's ideological evolution ended in the ideals of the French or American Revolutions: While particular regimes (政治制度) in the real world might not implement these ideals fully, their theoretical truth is absolute and could not be improved upon. Hence it did not matter to Kojève that the consciousness of the postwar generation of Europeans had not been universalized throughout the world; if ideological development had in fact ended, the homogenous state would eventually become victorious throughout the material world.

The end of history has come

- ⁸ I have neither the space nor, frankly, the ability to defend in depth Hegel's radical idealist perspective. The issue is not whether Hegel's system was right, but whether his perspective might uncover the problematic nature of many materialist explanations we often take for granted. This is not to deny the role of material factors as such. To a literal-minded idealist, human society can be built around any arbitrary set of principles regardless of their relationship to the material world. And in fact men have proven themselves able to endure the most extreme material hardships in the name of ideas that exist in the realm of the spirit alone, be it the divinity of cows for the Hindu people or the nature of the Holy Trinity (三位一体).
- ⁹ But while man's very perception of the material world is shaped by his historical consciousness of it, the material world can clearly affect in return the viability (可行性) of a particular state of consciousness. In particular, the spectacular abundance of advanced liberal economies and the infinitely diverse consumer culture made possible by them seem to both foster and preserve liberalism in the political sphere. I want to avoid the materialist determinism that says that liberal economics inevitably produces liberal politics, because I believe that both economics and politics presuppose an autonomous prior state of consciousness that makes them possible. But that state of consciousness that permits the growth of liberalism seems to stabilize in the way one would expect at the end of history if it is underwritten by the abundance of a modern free market economy. We might summarize the content of the universal homogenous state as liberal democracy in the political sphere combined with easy access to VCRs and stereos in the economic.

¹⁰ This does not by any means imply the end of international conflict per se (从其本身考虑). For the world at that point would be divided between a part that was historical and a part that was post-historical. Conflict between states still in history, and between those states and those at the end of history, would still be possible. There would still be a high and perhaps rising level of ethnic and nationalist violence, since those are impulses incompletely played out, even in parts of the post-historical world. Palestinians and Kurds, Sikhs and Tamils, Irish Catholics and Walloons, Armenians and Azeris, will continue to have their unresolved grievances (积怨). This implies that terrorism and wars of national liberation will continue to be an important item on the international agenda. But large-scale conflict must involve large states still caught in the grip of history, and they are what appear to be passing from the scene.

¹¹ The end of history will be a very sad time. The struggle for recognition, the willingness to risk one's life for a purely abstract goal, the worldwide ideological struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands. In the post-historical period there will be neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual (永久的) caretaking of the museum of human history. I can feel in myself, and see in others around me, a powerful nostalgia (怀旧) for the time when history existed. Such nostalgia, in fact, will continue to fuel competition and conflict even in the post-historical world for some time to come. Even though I recognize its inevitability, I have the most ambivalent (矛盾的) feelings for the civilization that has been created in Europe since 1945, with its north Atlantic and Asian offshoots. Perhaps this very prospect of centuries of boredom at the end of history will serve to get history started once again.

RESOURCES & LINKS

"European Civilization, 1648–1945": an Open Yale Course

Lectured by Professor John Merriman, the course offers a broad survey of modern European history, from the end of the Thirty Years' War to the aftermath of World War II.

Along with the consideration of major events and figures such as the French Revolution and Napoleon, attention will be paid to the experience of ordinary people in times of upheaval and transition. The period will thus be viewed neither in terms of historical inevitability nor as a procession of great men, but rather through the lens of the complex interrelations between demographic change, political revolution, and cultural development. Textbook accounts will be accompanied by the study of exemplary works of art, literature, and cinema.

The course is available at <http://oyc.yale.edu/history/hist-202#sessions>.

Western Civilization with Chinese Comparisons, 3rd ed. (2010)

Western Civilization with Chinese Comparisons (3rd ed.) is written by John G. Blair and Jerusha Hull McCormack in 2010. This book provides a powerful one-stop tool for understanding China as a civilization comparable to that of the West. The authors "have provided the academy with an effective multimedia engine for pursuing responsible cultural comparisons between the Chinese and Western narratives."

Dominant views of the world, Western and Chinese, traditional and modern, are assessed under six categories: Learning (in and out of school), Humans in Families, Defining Humans (bodies and selves), Humans and their Surroundings (economics vs. ecology), Humans and Authority, Values and Worldviews.

This book is ideal for Western readers who seek to understand where the new, rising China is coming from in the world of today.

Troy (2004)

Troy is a 2004 American epic war film directed by Wolfgang Petersen. It is loosely based on Homer's *Iliad*, which narrates the story of the 10 year Trojan War. The end of the film (the sacking of Troy) is not taken from the *Iliad* as the ending of the *Iliad* was based on Hector's death and funeral burial.

Civilisation: A Personal View by Kenneth Clark (1969)

Civilisation—in full, *Civilisation: A Personal View by Kenneth Clark*—is a television documentary series outlining the history of Western art, architecture and philosophy since the Dark Ages. The series was produced by the BBC and aired in 1969 on BBC2. This ambitious British undertaking spanned an "80,000 mile journey visiting 13 countries, 117 locations, 18 libraries, and 118 museums." Both the television scripts and the accompanying book version were written by art historian Lord Kenneth Clark (1903–1983), who also presented the series. The series is considered to be a landmark in British Television broadcasting of the visual arts.